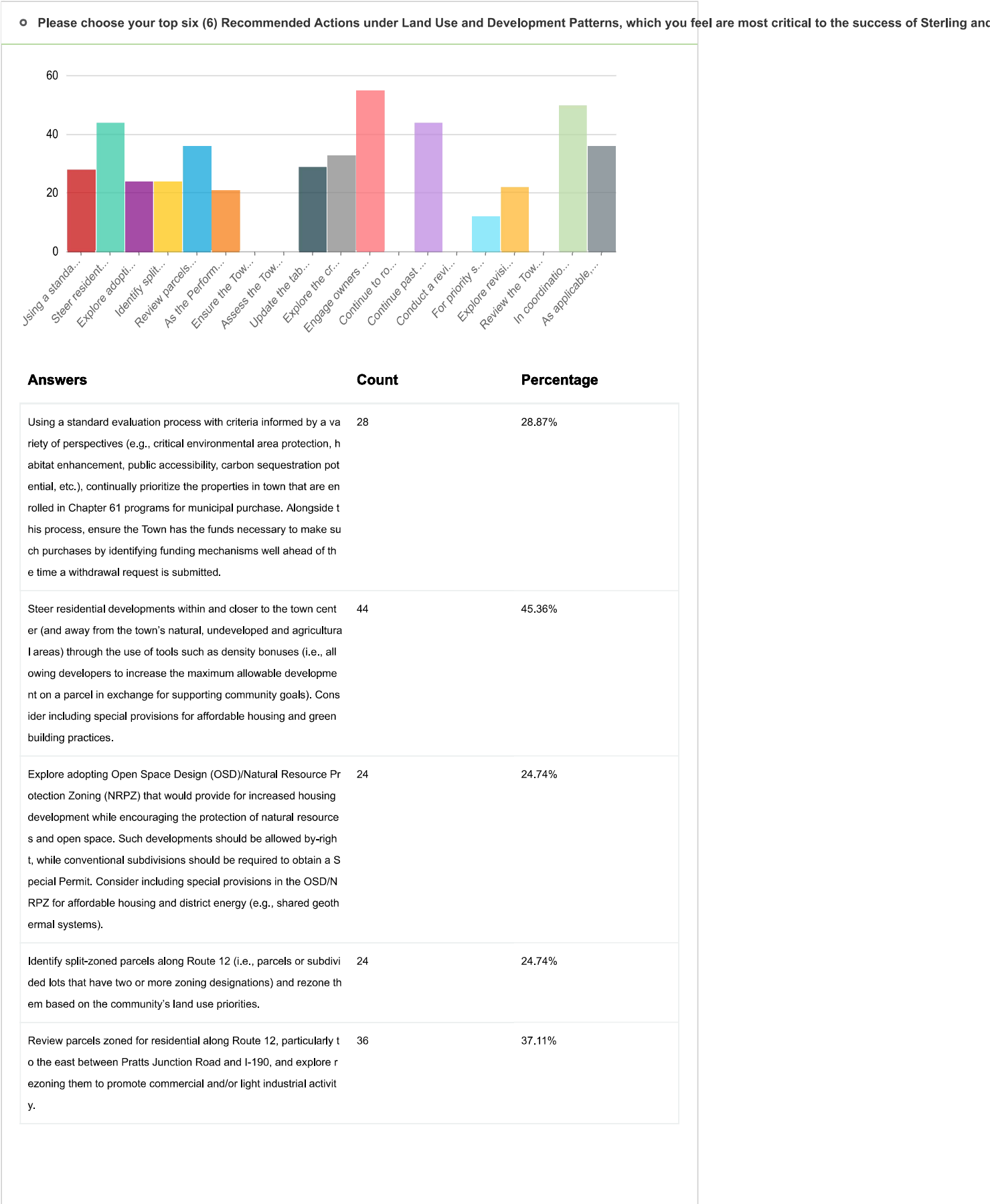


Sterling Master Plan – Survey #3, September/October 2020 - Part II

Land Use and Development Patterns



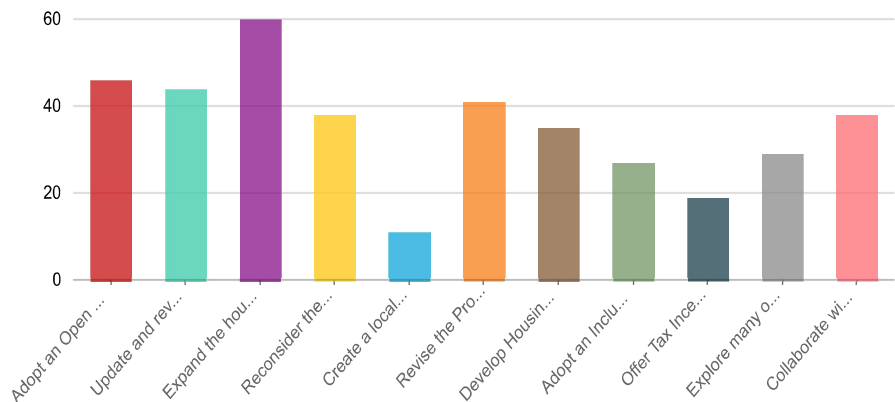
As the Performance Zone I district has not been utilized as originally envisioned, continue to explore alternative zoning that would promote commercial and/or light industrial activities in this area, consistent with recent developments.	21	21.65%
Ensure the Town's Protective Bylaws adequately promote Pratts Junction Road and Chocksett Road as commercial and light industrial corridors. For example, several properties to the north of Pratts Junction Road are within the RRF district but are not under a residential use.	0	0%
Assess the Town's land holdings and develop strategic plans for surplus properties that support the community's land use priorities.	0	0%
Update the table of uses, specifically for the Commercial and Light Industrial districts, in the Town's Protective Bylaws to address more modern uses and needs.	29	29.9%
Explore the creation of a lot coverage bylaw pertinent to East Lake Waushacum to address the trend of the "McMansionization" (i.e., the development of homes that feel too large for its property and out of scale with the homes that surround it) of surrounding parcels.	33	34.02%
Engage owners of productive agricultural land, as well as owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land, in expanding Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs) in Sterling. APRs would pay farmland owners the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction.	55	56.7%
Continue to roll out the Town's online permitting system and conduct regular reviews, including through the solicitation of user feedback, to ensure it is functioning as intended.	0	0%
Continue past efforts of the Sterling Economic Development Committee to develop a "business development guide" that would explain in easily understandable terms the Town's permitting requirements and associated procedures. Update and revise this document as required.	44	45.36%
Conduct a review of the Town's Protective Bylaws to identify areas where permitting requirements are redundant (e.g., where both a Site Plan Review and Special Permit are required). Reduce or remove the redundancy by determining the most appropriate mechanism based on the intent of the original requirements. Note that Special Permits can act as a deterrent to development unless market conditions provide enough incentives to offset the additional effort required to obtain local approval.	0	0%
For priority sites with development opportunities (Refer to Chapter 3, Economic Development), explore the potential of adopting MGL Ch. 43D - Expedited Permitting, which generally improves the marketability of the targeted commercial or industrial zoned sites and increases the transparency and efficiency of municipal permitting. If adopted, it would commit the Town to rendering decisions on local permits within 180 days of application. Being site specific, this provision does not affect town-wide permitting.	12	12.37%

Explore revising the Flood Plain district to address relevant climate change projections, namely regulating to the 0.2-percent annual chance flood or more studied indicator. Work with local partners, including the Sterling Land Trust, to purchase such lands for conservation purposes, as available.	22	22.68%
Review the Town's Protective Bylaws to ensure they are not creating unintended effects that increase the community's risks to climate hazards. For instance, excessive requirements for impervious surfaces can increase exposure to flood hazards.	0	0%
In coordination with the Sterling Municipal Light Department, consider adopting a bylaw that would facilitate and regulate the development of ground mounted or roof mounted solar systems. Refer to resources such as the Massachusetts' Department of Energy Resources' "Model Zoning for the Regulation of Solar Energy Systems."	50	51.55%
As applicable, ensure all future plans address resiliency for the community's top climate hazards. These hazards were identified through its 2020 Community Resilience Building Workshop, enabled by the Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, and include extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity and agriculture, high intensity rainfall, and droughts.	36	37.11%

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

Housing

Please choose your top four (4) Recommended Actions under Housing, which you feel are most critical to the success of Sterling and what is highly desired by t

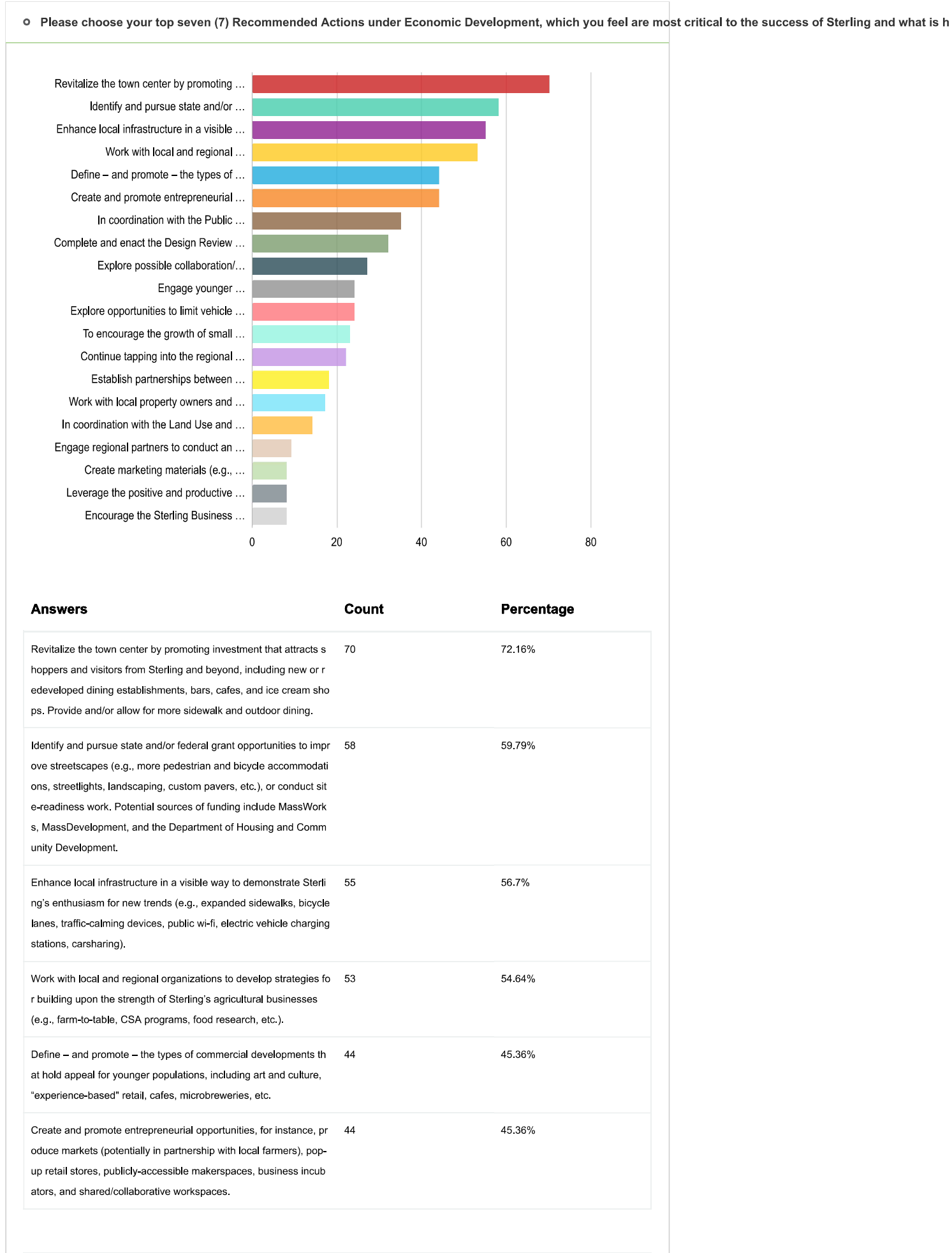


Answers	Count	Percentage
Adopt an Open Space Residential Development (or Cluster Development) Bylaw as a way to promote efficient land use for housing while preserving sensitive spaces.	46	47.42%
Update and revise the Protective Bylaws to permit senior, assisted-living housing and alternative housing types, such as apartments/condominiums, townhouses and other diverse housing types including, but not limited to, microunits.	44	45.36%

Expand the housing options for an aging population. Sterling's demographic projections indicate a need to expand housing options for an aging population with an examination of the current bylaw provisions with the objective of identifying additional strategies to encourage the development of senior, over 55 housing, and universal design to allow aging in place and further identify areas in Town that would benefit from this sort of development.	60	61.86%
Reconsider the Community Preservation Act (CPA) as a Smart Growth Tool. CPA is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA can also strengthen the local economy by expanding housing opportunities and construction jobs for Sterling's workforce.	38	39.18%
Create a local Housing Trust which would allow Sterling to collect funds for affordable housing and segregate them out of the general municipal budget into a trust fund and use the funds for local initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing.	11	11.34%
Revise the Protective Bylaws to permit mixed use by right in the Town Center Zoning District.	41	42.27%
Develop Housing on Town owned land/property. Many Massachusetts communities have underutilized properties and use creative measures for redevelopment such as a Request for Ideas or Design Contests.	35	36.08%
Adopt an Inclusionary and/or Incentive Zoning Bylaw as an effective tool that can be used by Sterling to ensure adequate affordable housing is included in the normal course of real estate development and is a mandatory approach (often in concert with a density bonus) that requires developers to make a portion of the housing units in their project affordable to low- and moderate-income households and is an effective means of increasing the number of affordable housing units and creates a wider variety of affordability levels within a development.	27	27.84%
Offer Tax Incentives in the form of a public/private partnership between the Town and individual homeowners to create affordable housing eligible for Sterling's affordable housing inventory.	19	19.59%
Explore many of the grant opportunities to help Sterling achieve its housing goals via any of, but not limited to, the following programs: Housing Choice Community Grant Program, Community One Stop for Growth Program.	29	29.9%
Collaborate with Private Non-Profit Collaborate with Private Non-Profit Organizations (e.g., Habitat for Humanity and Montachusett Enterprise Center). Habitat for Humanity (HFH) is a well-known non-profit that believes that all people should have a decent, safe, and affordable place to live. Habitat builds and repairs houses throughout the world using volunteer labor and donations. Partner families then purchase these houses through no-profit mortgage loans or innovative financing methods. Sterling is located within the service area of Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts which is headquartered in Fitchburg.	38	39.18%

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Economic Development

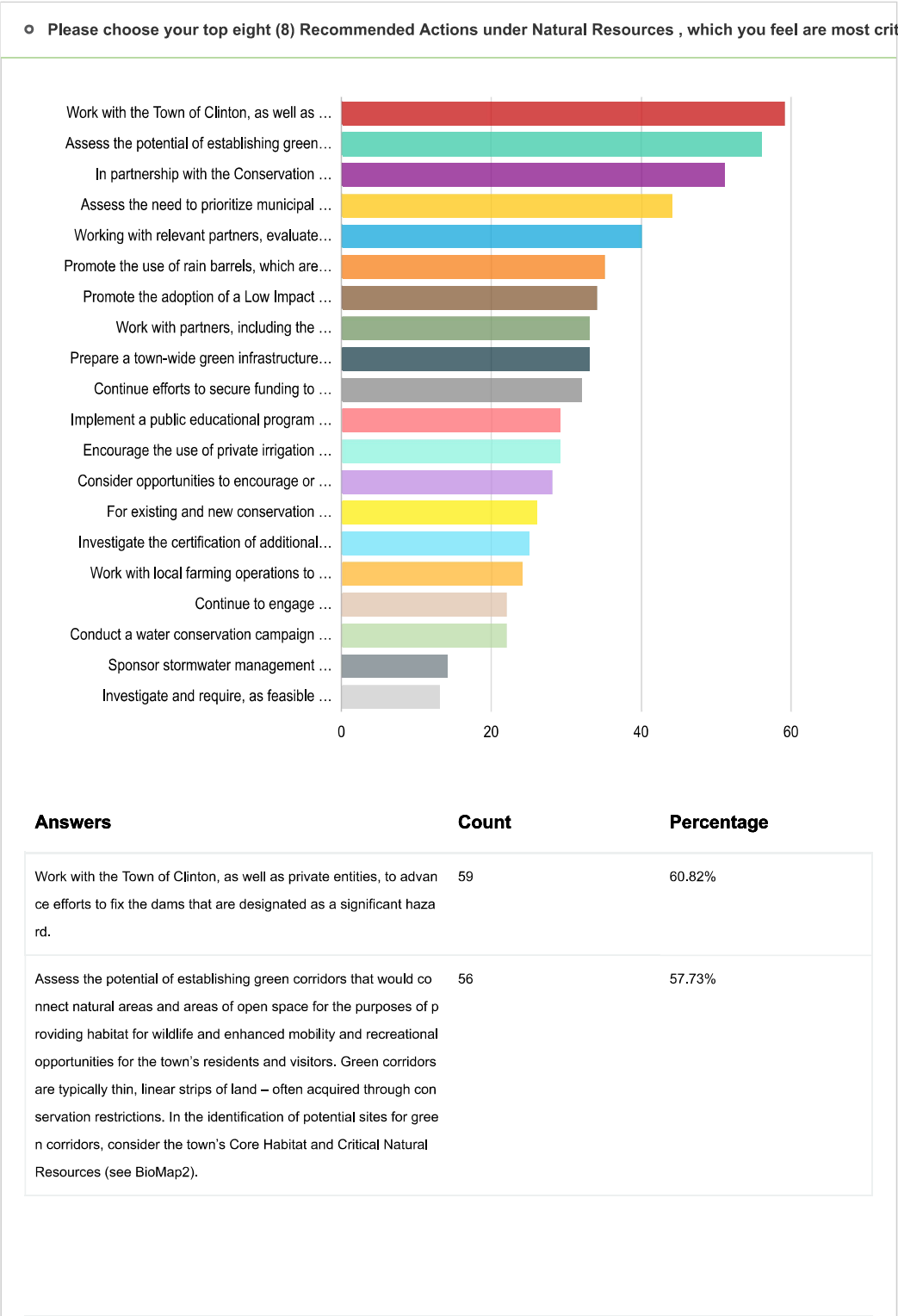


In coordination with the Public Facilities and Services Chapter explore opportunities to implement public sewer, especially in the town center area.	35	36.08%
Complete and enact the Design Review Guidelines that will provide recommendations on the design of signage and facades in building projects taking place in the town center. Consider making them regulatory, as opposed to advisory.	32	32.99%
Explore possible collaboration/agreements with neighboring towns for mutual beneficial utility expansions and development at town boundaries. For example, the development of a potential business park at the Clinton town line vacant lands on Metropolitan Road line zoned for light industrial.	27	27.84%
Engage younger populations from around the region to identify opportunities and barriers for attracting them to (or keeping them in) Sterling (e.g., availability and attainability of diverse housing types, public school performance, retail and dining options, etc.).	24	24.74%
Explore opportunities to limit vehicle activity in the town center at strategic times throughout the year, to enhance the pedestrian experience.	24	24.74%
To encourage the growth of small businesses in alignment with envisioned economic development, create a Sterling Development Guide. Such guidance may identify and describe local resources, permitting and zoning processes, tax policies, and available financing (e.g., business loans and/or grant opportunities).	23	23.71%
Continue tapping into the regional network through active participation in the Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce and North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce. These cross-municipal partnerships will drive economic growth in a powerful way.	22	22.68%
Establish partnerships between Sterling's business community and the local/regional student population, to promote paths toward successful employment and careers.	18	18.56%
Work with local property owners and regional partners to identify prime development sites throughout the town and develop clear visions and marketing strategies for their redevelopment. Explore statewide resources for promoting development sites, such as those sponsored by MassDevelopment and MassEcon.	17	17.53%
In coordination with the Land Use and Development Patterns Chapter, explore opportunities to expand upon the supply of parcels available for industrial development, within proximity of existing industrial districts (e.g., Chocksett, the North Gateway, etc.).	14	14.43%
Engage regional partners to conduct an economic development study to understand how Sterling performs against, and complements, other communities within the region. Identify opportunities to cross-promote economic development with other municipalities, potentially including a focus on the Montachusett region's significant manufacturing employment base.	9	9.28%
Create marketing materials (e.g., pamphlets, videos, social media, and other web content) to promote the town's assets/resources throughout the region and state.	8	8.25%

Leverage the positive and productive energy of the Sterling Economic Development Committee to continue to build the narrative presented in this chapter. The EDC can determine action items, and assign roles and responsibilities, for carrying out the Master Plan's recommended strategies, tapping into other departments and committees, as necessary.	8	8.25%
Encourage the Sterling Business Association to keep up momentum and meet on a regular basis.	8	8.25%

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Natural Resources



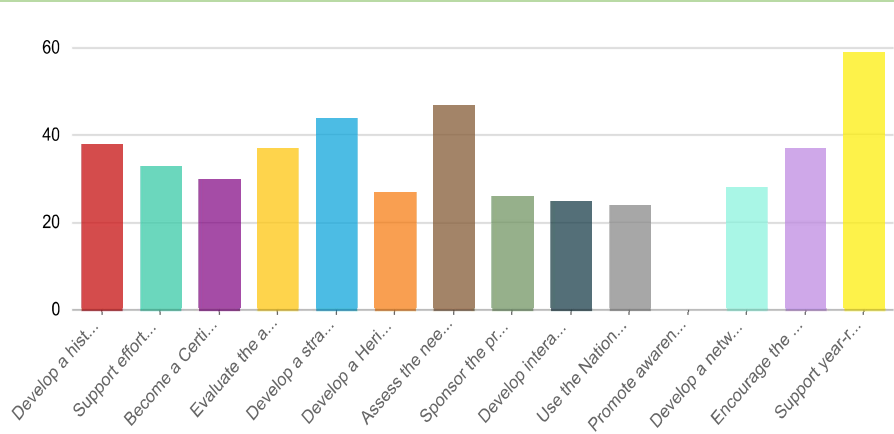
In partnership with the Conservation Commission, Sterling Land Trust, and Department of Conservation and Recreation, work to create/coordinate local forest management plans, with a focus on maintaining and improving biodiversity.	51	52.58%
Assess the need to prioritize municipal tree replacements and new plantings in areas that would reduce heat islands (e.g., around buildings, at pavements in parking lots and along streets).	44	45.36%
Working with relevant partners, evaluate appropriate levels of conserved lands in Sterling, balancing community priorities such as community character and economic development. As appropriate, increase the Town's inventory of conservation lands and drive the granting of conservation restrictions on privately-held lands.	40	41.24%
Promote the use of rain barrels, which are intended to collect rain water for landscape irrigation purposes. Consider partnering with a local rain barrel vendor on a program that provides rain barrels at a reduced cost to residents.	35	36.08%
Promote the adoption of a Low Impact Development (LID) Bylaw. LID is a development approach that first identifies natural resource areas for preservation and then applies stormwater best management practices (BMPs) to preserve those natural features and associated hydrology. Examples of such practices include permeable pavers, bioretention, and green roofs. LID techniques are applied instead of traditional stormwater management methods of collecting, conveying, and piping away stormwater runoff.	34	35.05%
Work with partners, including the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, to reduce salt use on major roadways, particularly those near aquatic ecosystems and drinking water supplies.	33	34.02%
Prepare a town-wide green infrastructure plan that would integrate green infrastructure, such as LID, into the Town's stormwater, combined sewers, and roads. Green infrastructure has the benefits of managing flooding, preparing for drought, reducing urban heat island effects, among others.	33	34.02%
Continue efforts to secure funding to address nutrient loading to East Lake Waushacum.	32	32.99%
Implement a public educational program on proper septic system use and maintenance. Include a focus on using phosphate-free cleaning products, correct hazardous waste disposal practices, avoiding the use of garbage disposals for food waste, and conducting regular inspections and pumping. Encourage the installation of advanced treatment systems that result in greater nitrogen or phosphorus removal, in contrast to typical septic tanks.	29	29.9%
Encourage the use of private irrigation wells instead of making connections to the Town's potable water supply.	29	29.9%
Consider opportunities to encourage or require water efficient design and water efficient landscapes for new construction and major renovations. Advocate for such inclusions in the State's Building and Plumbing codes.	28	28.87%
For existing and new conservation restrictions, ensure the Town has as the proper monitoring and enforcement protocols in place.	26	26.8%
Investigate the certification of additional vernal pools in Sterling to provide them with regulatory protections.	25	25.77%

Work with local farming operations to promote water-saving farming techniques, such as the use of alternative water sources and proper irrigation scheduling.	24	24.74%
Continue to engage property owners with lands eligible for the State's Chapter 61 programs and encourage program enrollment. Provide to them education on the programs, as applicable, including their tax benefits.	22	22.68%
Conduct a water conservation campaign to reduce use of potable water for landscaping purposes. This campaign should be targeted by household, using a comparison of winter and summer time usage. Households with the greatest change in usage should be provided with educational materials that include a comparison of their water usage against others in the community.	22	22.68%
Sponsor stormwater management educational programs for residents to address potential sources of contamination of stormwater, to encourage stewardship of water resources.	14	14.43%
Investigate and require, as feasible and where applicable, provisions for buffering developments from the South Meadow Brook to ensure protection from nutrient loading and stormwater erosion.	13	13.4%

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

Historic and Cultural Resources

Please choose your top five (5) Recommended Actions under Historic and Cultural Resources, which you feel are most critical to the success of Sterling and whi



Answers	Count	Percentage
Develop a historic resources Preservation Plan for the town or for individual neighborhoods that establishes priorities and strategic milestones for the identification, management, and promotions of Sterling's historic properties. The MHC Survey and Planning Grant Program can be a source of financial support for the creation of this plan.	38	39.18%
Support efforts to pass the Community Preservation Act, which provides funding for the direct preservation of historic resources; the preparation of structural assessments and feasibility studies for building reuse; and hiring an architect to create construction plans.	33	34.02%

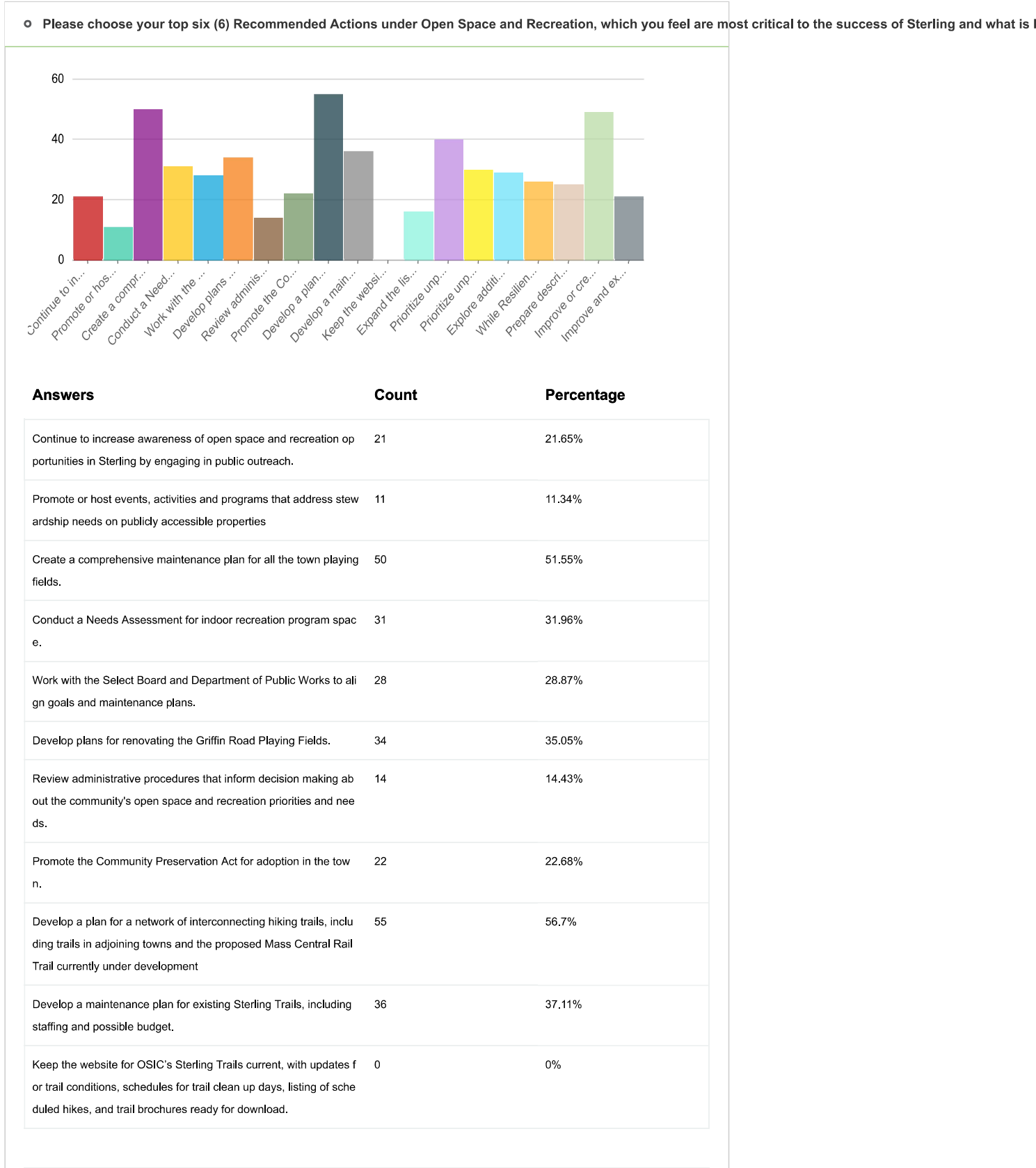
Become a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the MHC and National Park Service, which provides additional opportunities for funding and technical assistance. Additionally, becoming a CLG would allow Sterling to participate directly in the review and approval of National Register nominations.	30	30.93%
Evaluate the adoption of a Demolition Review Bylaw or Demolition-By-Neglect Bylaw. Demolition Review allows the Sterling Historical Commission to impose a demolition delay on preferably preserved historic buildings that allows time to identify future uses that will save the building (on-site or elsewhere). A Demolition-By-Neglect Bylaw helps protect neighborhood character by disallowing the intentional deterioration of buildings.	37	38.14%
Develop a strategy to assess the needs of the town's numerous historic cemeteries. Prioritize cemeteries according to significance and threats, and contract specialists in cemetery preservation to delineate the grounds and develop restoration and maintenance plans.	44	45.36%
Develop a Heritage Landscape Report, based on the former Department of Conservation and Recreation's Heritage Landscape Inventory program. Heritage landscapes consider natural and manmade features together, such agricultural lands, woodlands, scenic viewsheds, and industrial waterways. Identifying priority heritage landscapes, perhaps including Wekepeke Brook, is the first step in identifying tools to protect them and can inform development and planning initiatives town-wide.	27	27.84%
Assess the need to repurpose Town-owned facilities for community needs by identifying short-term and long-term planning goals for surplus properties.	47	48.45%
Sponsor the preparation of an expansion of the Sterling Center Historic District and the listing of the Waushacum Village, formerly known as Sterling Campground.	26	26.8%
Develop interactive programming such as tours, scavenger hunts, and family photo scanning, around the significant historic resources, including the West Sterling Schoolhouse, the Town-owned cemeteries, or the Town Pound.	25	25.77%
Use the National Register districts to market the use of historic tax credits by existing and future owners and developers.	24	24.74%
Promote awareness of Sterling's heritage through the publication of articles in local community papers, social media posts, installing heritage-related signage, and pursuing collaborations with community organizations to develop co-sponsored programming. Enlist related volunteer efforts from the town's elders.	0	0%
Develop a network of community partners to bring programming to a wider audience by engaging local organization and committees, such as the Sterling Senior Center Council on Aging, Conant Public Library, Sterling Historical Society, Sterling Historical Commission, Sterling "Young Adults Helping Out Others" Y.A.H.O.O., and Sterling Public Schools.	28	28.87%
Encourage the engagement of local artists, including students, through the use of public art and performance throughout the town.	37	38.14%

Support year-round arts and cultural programming by securing temporary spaces, such as the 1835 Town Hall, that encourage visitation during different seasons and provide resources for local organizations and entities to expand virtual programming.

5960.82%

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Open Space and Recreation

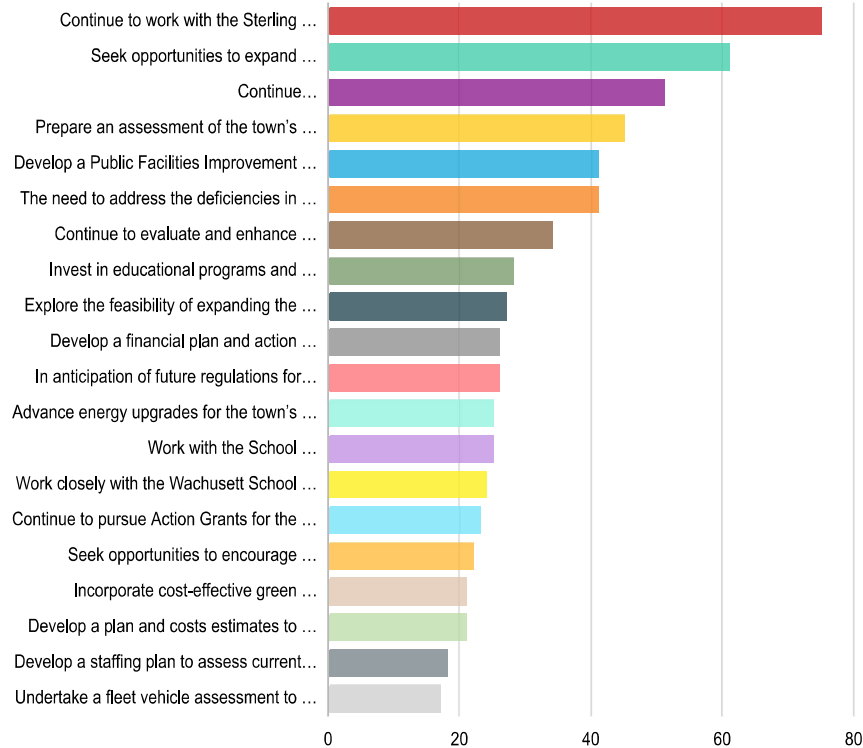


Expand the list of trail leaders and continue an active program of scheduled hikes with leaders and augmented with (amateur) naturalists for fauna and flora commentaries.	16	16.49%
Prioritize unprotected open space parcels that may become available for acquisition by the town in terms of preserving ecosystems, wildlife corridor conservation and wildlife habitat and protection of important water resources.	40	41.24%
Prioritize unprotected parcels of agricultural land in terms of soil quality and suitability for farming.	30	30.93%
Explore additional options available to the town for acquiring non-protected land.	29	29.9%
While Resilience and sustainability are typically infrastructure-related issues, decisions regarding open space protection need to consider: (i) Protecting and not overtaxing aquifers, lakes and other water resources, (ii) providing buffer for the more frequently occurring heavy downpours; (iii) having a strong farming community that is well-integrated into the local food network.	26	26.8%
Prepare descriptions of a few Sterling Easy Trails that form short sections of the existing Sterling Trails and are particularly suited for inexperienced hikers while being Age and Dementia-Friendly.	25	25.77%
Improve or create parking access to conservation, town forest properties and hiking trails.	49	50.52%
Improve and expand upon recreational programming to be more accessible and inclusive.	21	21.65%

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

Public Facilities and Services

Please choose your top seven (7) Recommended Actions under Public Facilities and Services, which you feel are most critical to the success of Sterling and wh

**Answers****Count****Percentage**

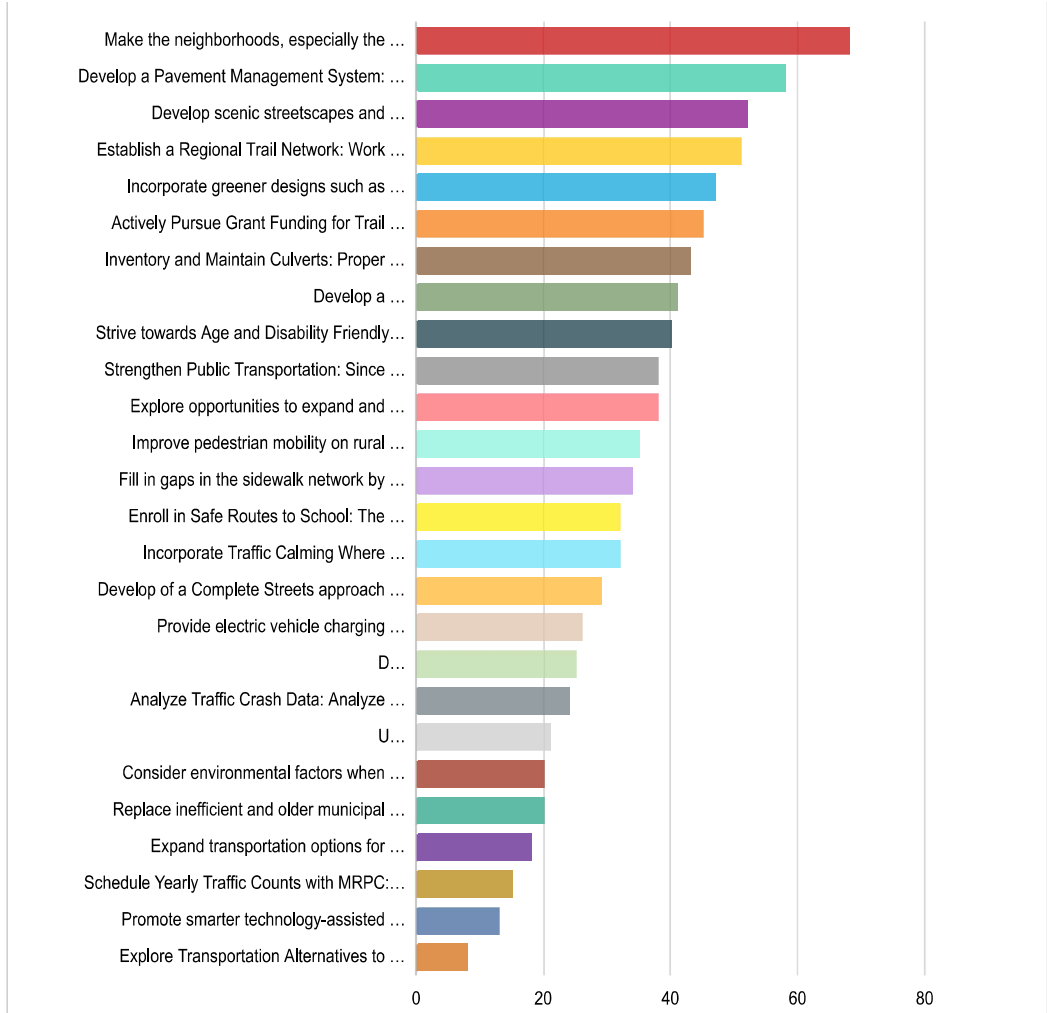
Continue to work with the Sterling Municipal Light Department to deliver low-cost renewable energy to the Sterling community.	75	77.32%
Seek opportunities to expand high speed internet access throughout Sterling, particularly to those that are most in need (e.g., low-income households).	61	62.89%
Continue to fund annual improvements to roadways and seek opportunities to obtain state funding for long-term transportation enhancements as identified in the Circulation and Transportation chapter. In the process, seek opportunities to obtain grants that will enable the town to further the implementation of Complete Streets and active transportation projects.	51	52.58%
Prepare an assessment of the town's forecasted future needs for investments in pump stations, wells, and the delivery of water.	45	46.39%
Develop a Public Facilities Improvement Plan for all Town buildings that identifies near-, mid-, and long-term improvements (and costs), so that the town will have a comprehensive inventory of the required maintenance and capital improvements needed for its public facilities.	41	42.27%
The need to address the deficiencies in the DPW facilities (such as the potential renovation or replacement of the existing building and storage needs) were noted as a high priority as part of this master planning process. In concert with creating a Public Facilities Improvement Plan, review the specific needs of the DPW facilities to address physical needs, as well as operational and support equipment needs.	41	42.27%
Continue to evaluate and enhance transportation services offered to seniors and residents with disabilities.	34	35.05%

Invest in educational programs and materials that provide residents and business owners information about the town's solid waste and recycling programs to improve the town's overall diversion rate.	28	28.87%
Explore the feasibility of expanding the current Senior Center to meet the space needs for programs serving the town's senior population. As part of this study, determine what feasible recreational programming will be in demand for both seniors and the town's youth to incorporate such programming into the facility.	27	27.84%
Develop a financial plan and action plan, including through appropriating and allocating funds in the town's Capital Improvement Plan, to implement the recommendations identified in the Public Facilities Improvement Plan.	26	26.8%
In anticipation of future regulations for water resource management, plan for adequate staffing to ensure the town has the resources necessary to assist with the monitoring and training that will be required to continue to ensure safe water and water quality throughout the Town of Sterling.	26	26.8%
Advance energy upgrades for the town's existing buildings to improve overall performance and costs.	25	25.77%
Work with the School Committee to assess the ability to better utilize the public school facilities and programs for other community uses, especially as it pertains to the interaction between the schools and the Senior Center.	25	25.77%
Work closely with the Wachusett School Department, Sterling representatives on the Wachusett School Committee, and the Finance Committee to identify and support capital improvements that are needed to support school operations.	24	24.74%
Continue to pursue Action Grants for the implementation of resilience measures, particularly those that are nature-based, through the State's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program.	23	23.71%
Seek opportunities to encourage collaboration among the Council on Aging (COA), Recreation Department, and Sterling's Public Schools to promote intergenerational activities.	22	22.68%
Incorporate cost-effective green infrastructure strategies into all municipal projects for stormwater management.	21	21.65%
Develop a plan and costs estimates to provide electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for vehicles at all the municipal buildings and parking lots.	21	21.65%
Develop a staffing plan to assess current and future staffing needs and enhance necessary staff trainings to all departments to address anticipated growth in municipal services and implement the recommendations included in the Master Plan, so that the town can deliver its services effectively.	18	18.56%
Undertake a fleet vehicle assessment to ascertain opportunities to right size vehicles and convert to electric alternatives.	17	17.53%

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

Circulation and Transportation

○ Please choose your top nine (9) Recommended Actions under Circulation and Transportation, which you feel are most critical to the success of Sterling and wha



Answers	Count	Percentage
Make the neighborhoods, especially the town center, more pedestrian friendly through the construction and rehabilitation of sidewalks. Current design standards for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance should be incorporated.	68	70.1%
Develop a Pavement Management System: The Town needs to protect its investment in roads and other public facilities such as bridges and culverts; lack of routine maintenance investment results in needless deterioration and replacement resulting in reduced utility of the facility and greater long-term replacement costs. Where appropriate, the town should seek local and federal funding assistance on eligible roads. Sterling should consider working with MRPC as well as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) highway division office on projects and funding opportunities.	58	59.79%
Develop scenic streetscapes and landscaping that are close to the highways or along medians that can increase driver awareness resulting in slower speeds and safer streets; replace overhead utilities with underground services in the town center. This includes installing period lighting in the town center; lighting for sidewalks needs to be pedestrian-scale, designing ADA-compliant sidewalks and crosswalks in the town center, and; replacing existing faded crosswalks with imprinted/textured crosswalks at intersections and mid-block locations, where necessary.	52	53.61%

Establish a Regional Trail Network: Work with neighboring communities and regional entities to establish a regional trail network that would ultimately link Sterling to various recreational opportunities outside of the town (i.e. Leominster/Fitchburg Rail Trail). Currently there are limited bike and pedestrian trails within the community. The town may wish to identify, prioritize and implement additional trail opportunities. Bike lanes and/or sidewalks should be incorporated into roadway projects where appropriate. Roadway projects should take into account existing and/or possible future connections for trails and other multimodal infrastructure. Sterling should also create its own Community Trail Plan. MRPC can assist and there are other communities in the area that can be used as a model.	51	52.58%
Incorporate greener designs such as street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, paving materials and permeable surfaces, with plants and soils collecting rain water to reduce flooding and pollution.	47	48.45%
Actively Pursue Grant Funding for Trail Development: (1) MassTransits Grant program supports recreational trail and shared use pathway projects across the Commonwealth. This grant is reviewed and recommended by the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board and the Commonwealth's Inter-Agency Trails Team. (2) Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is federally funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), administered at the State level, and provide funding for the development and maintenance of recreational trail projects, both motorized and non-motorized. (3) Commonwealth Trails Grant is funded through the State's annual Capital Investment Plan (CIP) and aim to help communities design, create and maintain off-road shared-use pathway connections between where Massachusetts residents live, learn, work, shop and recreate, especially by building out the longer distance regional networks of multi-use pathways across the state and filling in critical gaps in existing networks, or overcoming current barriers to connectivity.	45	46.39%
Inventory and Maintain Culverts: Proper drainage is an essential element of road maintenance. The town should conduct and maintain an inventory of culverts within the community and seek to identify a mechanism to clean, repair and update the structures as needed. The town should also diligently conduct annual road side maintenance including the removal of winter sand and any blockage. The town could also incorporate greener designs such as street trees, rain gardens, bioswales, paving materials and permeable surfaces, with plants and soils collecting rain water to reduce flooding and pollution.	43	44.33%
Develop a parking management plan for the town center area with a goal of identifying the most efficient means of utilizing the current parking supply, identifying future supply options and wayfinding, which is the directional signage or messaging that helps people navigate to a destination.	41	42.27%
Strive towards Age and Disability Friendly Transportation: For seniors, many of whom are no longer able to drive, dependable transportation is a lifeline to the world. Availability of transportation, affordability, reliability and frequency, and safety and comfort are age and disability friendly considerations that Sterling should continue to prioritize when engaging in any transportation efforts.	40	41.24%

Strengthen Public Transportation: Since the town of Sterling is in relatively close proximity to the Leominster commuter rail line, there is a need to get residents and visitors to and from the train station possibly via transit bus or shuttle. This would be particularly useful for those residents who are considered low income, elderly or disabled. A way to initiate some progress would be for the Sterling Select Board to open a dialogue with the Montachusett Area Regional Transit Authority (MART). Discussion between Sterling and MART could include relevant/current MART programs.	38	39.18%
Explore opportunities to expand and enhance current bicycle paths within the community and education to encourage bicycling in Sterling. A map depicting the location of existing and proposed bicycle paths/lanes will assist with gaps in connectivity to destination points.	38	39.18%
Improve pedestrian mobility on rural residential roads by exploring opportunities for interconnecting short sections of trails and connecting cul-de-sacs.	35	36.08%
Fill in gaps in the sidewalk network by connecting neighborhoods. A map depicting the location of current and proposed sidewalks will help determine where connection needs to occur.	34	35.05%
Enroll in Safe Routes to School: The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is a federally funded initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) that encourages elementary and middle school students to safely walk and bike to/from school by using a collaborative, community-focused approach that bridges the gap between health and transportation. Sterling will be able to prioritize the construction of sidewalks and related repairs by the schools in addition to placing signage in school pick-up and drop-off areas to discourage vehicles from idling and thus reduce pollution from automobiles. Sterling is not currently enrolled in the Safe Routes to School Program. More information about this program can be found at https://www.mass.gov/safe-routes-to-school .	32	32.99%
Incorporate Traffic Calming Where Appropriate: Traffic calming measures include a range of strategies to slow down traffic and deter the use of local residential roads for through traffic. Strategies might include one-way streets, neckdowns or narrow travel lanes, on-street parking, or speed bumps. These strategies include ones that may be more effective than those currently employed by the town such as the development of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets. Traffic calming must be conducted in a comprehensive manner—not piecemeal—otherwise traffic will simply shift from one local street to another. Enforcement measures should be identified and put in place. The Town can also require developers to implement traffic calming measures in new subdivisions. Additionally, the Town should explore the adoption of a Transportation Demand Management program, which is the application of strategies and policies to help reduce or redistribute travel demand throughout town.	32	32.99%
Develop of a Complete Streets approach on all active and future roadway projects to further promote walking and cycling as safe and active transportation options.	29	29.9%
Provide electric vehicle charging stations on municipal property.	26	26.8%

Develop a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan: The town may seek to establish a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan of non-motorized users that could identify major travel routes, crosswalks, sidewalks, appropriate pavement markings and signage, etc. This plan should include major areas of concern for the town (i.e. downtown, town hall, library, schools, recreation facilities, etc.). In addition, this plan could identify links to the town's overall trail/bike network.	25	25.77%
Analyze Traffic Crash Data: Analyze traffic crash data for crashes on major roads and intersections to determine the patterns and causes. Seek potential projects to address identified issues at major crash locations. Where appropriate, state and federal funding assistance should be utilized. Consider working with MRPC as well as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) highway division office on projects and funding opportunities.	24	24.74%
Upon completion of the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, continue to update the plan in order to remain active and eligible for future state funding grants. Include Complete Streets priority projects in the Capital Improvement Plan (develop one if not already done) to be implemented with Chapter 90 funding or funding through the Town's budget allocation. And, continue to actively engage with MassDOT to pursue funding for Complete Streets priority projects.	21	21.65%
Consider environmental factors when reviewing and prioritizing transportation projects and proactively monitor and assess vulnerable infrastructures.	20	20.62%
Replace inefficient and older municipal vehicles with energy efficient models and seek grants to assist with this.	20	20.62%
Expand transportation options for traveling regionally into and out of Sterling and explore the potential for a fixed or flexible route public transportation service.	18	18.56%
Schedule Yearly Traffic Counts with MRPC: On an annual basis MRPC, solicits from each community up to 5 traffic count locations per calendar year. Sterling has taken advantage of this program in the past. The Town should continue to work with the MRPC to establish key traffic count locations to go along with those locations that are part of the MRPC's regional traffic count program. The purpose is to monitor traffic patterns over time in order to anticipate the need for future improvements. Traffic counts are conducted by MRPC at no cost to the community.	15	15.46%
Promote smarter technology-assisted design elements by incorporating intelligent signals and electric vehicle charging for greater system efficiencies and user convenience.	13	13.4%
Explore Transportation Alternatives to Connect the Youth Intra-Sterling: Connect Sterling youth intra-town at destination points, whether for employment or for socialization. Those without access to their own private vehicles are left to rely upon the availability of an adult to transport them to a specific destination. Exploring alternative sources or methods of transportation is recommended.	8	8.25%

Answered: 97 Skipped: 0

Additional Feedback on the Recommended Actions

Please provide any additional thoughts you may have regarding the Recommended Actions included in this survey.



https://survey123.arcgis.com/surveys/271abadfedac4c50be27fc1d14772ed3/analyze?chart=0.please_provide_any_additional_t:{"show":"responses"} 19/21

Take and demolish the Sterling Inn, sell and repurpose the property. It needs to be condemned and is too costly to renovate for a private owner or the town.. It's more than a community eyesore, it's condition and neglect brings down the north end of 12. Don't put this property in a delayed demolition status. It need to go asap. In it's current state its's a loss for the town and it 's residence. The town need a gas, diesel and electric charging station to serve it's residence and the greater Chockset industrial areal nearby the RT 190 intersection Sterling has only two stations, West Sterling and a outdated one south on Rt 12 beyond the center. The town should not be in the electrical vehicle charging business, rather provide incentives for private industrial business to do so.

1

STERLING NEEDS TO UPDATE TO THE NOW AND FUTURE. Get rid of the septic sewer system, and move towards modern day sewer. We are surrounded by cities and towns that have modern day sewer systems. We should be able to connect and slowing bring modern day sewer to Sterling. Not pollute the earth with septic. Enough with EV Charging stations. SMLD has solar everywhere yet our electric bills are going up. I instead offer residence incentives to install solar. I will not install solar as the cost is outrageous, there is no incentive for me. It would take 20yrs for a system to pay for itself. There is NO solar SREC in Sterling its all out of pocket and the town reaps the benefits.

1

Sidewalks, bike ways, trails, senior/low income transportation are important for our townsfolk

1

Remove the Jersey Barriers in the center of town. They are an eyesore.

1

Regarding parking, the "existing" parking available behind the town hall is not the solution to the lack of parking in the center of town, unless retail shoppers are re-directed to park there. The painted green pavement in the center of town is an eyesore and should not be considered "green space." It is a waste of four or five parking spaces that could be used by the church, the preschool, the library, retail spaces across the street, etc. It is also not a safe space for people to gather as cars speed down Meetinghouse Hill Road. I am not in favor of hiring more people in town to plan programs, cultural events, etc; there is already too much money wasted. The Cultural Council, Rec Department, Library and Senior Center already offer a lot of programming and should be utilized more before hiring someone else.

1

public transportation should be a higher priority

1

Please consider connecting the new sidewalks on 12 by the new rotaries to downtown. This is very important to me and I would use them everyday.

1

Parking needs to be expanded in the downtown area especially for people using the library. The library attracts many people each day and the parking is inadequate

1

On some questions I wanted to choose more or fewer items than required. Generally, I advocate development of low-cost, low-impact, low-technology infrastructure, practices, and policies, and activities that connect people to each other and to their surroundings. I think growth should be pursued modestly and only where necessary. There is non-monetary value in quiet, simple living that cannot easily be regained once lost to haste or unheeded development. Thank you for creating this survey and carefully considering the responses received.

1

More focus needed on town center rehabilitation and attracting new and desirable businesses to Sterling. Better collaboration on shared facilities with adjoining towns.

1

If Sterling creates an environment promoting non-motorized transportation (to the town center) we won't need as much space for parking cars. Beautifying it will also draw new businesses to the center which will support a pedestrian's/bicyclist's desire to visit with frequency (along with families).

1

I really did not like the forced answer on housing. Let me make myself clear, bring in more townhomes and apartments will increase population and will further put a strain on our infrastructure. This will also bring in more cars and more use on our roadways which will cause for greater cost in upkeep. This could over crowd our schools, which are already over crowded!!!!!! We need to push for sidewalks and town sewer before any new housing developments take place.

1

I immensely appreciate everyone hard work on this master plan, but this survey left me confused, concerned and wondering why the DPW isn't already maintaining culverts, why there were 20 questions regarding stormwater, why the pedestrian town center flow STILL hasn't been conducted, when the downtown sidewalk renovation will be constructed - I've been waiting in earnest for the design, and how the town will require private downtown buildings get a face-lift, why State stormwater mgmt regulations were posed in this survey as "optional"!!! Sorry, but the master planning presents as a mess :-(

1

I can't express enough how badly we need to improve our DPW. There is so much I see that needs to be done. Cut back vegetation growing into the roads, filling in erosion of edges of roads (example, Gates Rd and Rt. 12 corner), Melendy Rd (connects Chace Hill Rd and Squares hire Rd) edge constantly filled with water. Also remove the "pretend" sidewalks on Boutelle Rd and install REAL sidewalks

1

I believe the police could do more to encourage people obey the speed limits. Especially in areas like the center of town. Chace Hill Rd near Rota's and Rte 62 for examples.

1

I am in favor of goals and actions in support of creating a climate resilient community. I also think it is critical that we support schools and do everything possible to make them safe. I raised my kids here and want to make sure that other families can do the same.

1

Good Job!

1

Focus on roadway improvement. Redstone Hill Rd is in Horrible shape.

1

Finish the paving and resurfacing project from two years ago and put curbs back where they once were and since have been worn away by snow plows. Stormwater runoff is flooding residents properties on the low side of upper Beaman road as well as other street. Stop hiring the lowest bidder for road projects. Stop "pave over" street projects when the streets have gotten so high they're over front yards of residents thus causing stormwater runoff flooding. You can only "pave over" so many times ...then the street needs to be lowered by grinding or pulling the multiple surfaces off prior to resurfacing. Sterling has wonderful charm, history and character as it is. Commercializing, developments, apartments, and condos are not what residents want. We don't mind driving to a market or shopping center. We like the quiet sleepy town vibe that has always been Sterling. Our taxes have increased so steadily these past couple years it will soon be unsustainable for most residents. STOP TAXING US.

1

Excellent survey questions. Thanks for all of the hard work. There has been a lot of heavy lifting to get things this far.

1

Do not want to see cheaply built, and poorly designed buildings in our town - We have a beautiful Commons - I don't want to see it ruined by commercial junk being put up around it - or anywhere in the town.

1

Active road cyclist in town are a big hazard on our steep, winding, narrow roads, Do not support or contribute anything to the town or business in town, create problems Leave trash and expels their bodily waste on sides of roads, disrespect traffic and disrupts neighborhoods with their yelling to each other, ride up on bumpers of vehicles and yell at driver because their turning and need to slow down, blocks traffic do not ride on side of roads but in middle of roads

1

Sterling MUST, MUST address the excessive amount of tractor-trailers, dump/gravel trucks, gasoline tankers, and other heavy vehicles using Rtes 12 and Rte 62 (Sterling to Clinton) and the center of Sterling, every day, all day. Their noise is excessive, their sheer size is dangerous (stopping distances for 44 ton gravel trucks are farther than pedestrians/kids at a bus stop can run to avoid an out of control vehicle), their exhaust of ten choking, and MANY disregard posted speed limits. Trucks routinely speed, and Sterling police always avert their eyes. In areas without sidewalks (ex. parts of Clinton Rd.), walking with dogs/small children with trucks racing by is frightening and dangerous. Walking the center of town feels unsafe because of trucks. A simple start would be to make the use of Chocksett Rd for all trucks at or over the weight of a small loaded gravel truck (22 tons) a requirement as they enter Sterling from Clinton. A weigh station there should also be utilized.

1

0

Answered: 37 Skipped: 60